

Top 10 Hidden Mickeys

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# ORLANDO Attractions MAGAZINE

AttractionsMagazine.com

FALL 2010

Volume 3, Issue 4

## Magic Kingdom

Can You See it  
All in One Day?

Halloween Horror Nights

Dining at California Grill

Universal Ride Designer Q&A

Disney Beach & Yacht Clubs

Plus Much More...

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**THESE STORIES AND MORE...**

Most of the stories and photos in each issue of "Orlando Attractions Magazine" are just one of many you can find on our website. Stay up-to-date with all the latest news from Orlando online and through our free weekly e-mail newsletter. Sign-up at [attractionsmagazine.com/newslettersignup](http://attractionsmagazine.com/newslettersignup).

## THE CAPTAIN IS BACK

Michael Jackson's Captain EO made its return to Epcot on July 1. The 3D film originally played at the park from 1986-1994. It's now playing once again in the same theater with some new effects. Visit our website for photos and video of the redecorated theater, excited fans and new merchandise. You'll also hear from Imagineers Debbie Peterson and Joe Tankersley about bringing Captain EO back to Epcot.



## FULL STAR WARS COVERAGE



Star Wars Celebration V, an official fan gathering, took over the West Hall of the Orange County Convention Center for four days. Check our website for a huge photo gallery of the cool props, merchandise and to see fans in some great costumes. We also have 10 different videos ranging from "Meet the Slave Leias" to the full 45-minute Indiana Jones/Star Wars crossover held in the Indiana Jones theater at Hollywood Studios. Also don't miss the special Dance Off with the Star Wars Stars show and the Star Wars themed fireworks.



## STAR-STUDED OPENING

You won't want to miss seeing all the special events Universal hosted for three days during the grand opening of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. You'll see videos and photos of the Harry Potter movie stars starting the fireworks show above Hogwarts Castle, a Q&A with the stars, directors and theme park designers, and the official grand opening with first thoughts from guests.

## LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/attractions](http://twitter.com/attractions) and our Facebook page at [facebook.com/attractionsmagazine](http://facebook.com/attractionsmagazine). We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and short videos while we're inside Orlando's theme parks. You can also be notified of our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at [youtube.com/attractionsmagazine](http://youtube.com/attractionsmagazine).





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## YOUR COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS AND CREATIVITY ...

I hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine whether you're reading it in print or on your iPad. That's right, the magazine is now available through the free "Orlando Attractions Magazine" iPad app. The app allows you to browse our latest online news, photos and videos and purchase and download current and past issues.

Besides being able to buy the sold-out issues electronically, we've also made our first issue, and other sold out issues available as reprints. Visit our website for more information.

Publisher/Editor  
Matt Roseboom

### TOO BIG TO RIDE FORBIDDEN JOURNEY?

I can't tell you how disappointed we were that my husband and I could not ride the Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey ride due to our size. Universal has seats on all of their other rides to fit "larger" riders – why not on this one? It was exciting to see the books come to life, but very poorly planned as the stores' aisles are so small that it was difficult to view the merchandise or purchase anything. The lines were so long for some shops that we didn't even try to see them.

Harriet Docteroff  
Coral Springs, Fla.

**The stores are a bit small, but the whole area was made to be as authentic as possible. This also means making the stores small and putting in regular doors. For me, I'd rather put up with the small stores than to lose the immersive feeling.**

**But you're right about the Forbidden Journey seats not fitting all sizes. We've written about this issue on our website. You can go there to read more about it and see many comments our online readers have posted. You'll also read about Banks Lee. Banks made it his goal to**

**lose enough weight to ride and he accomplished that goal over the summer.**

### UNIVERSAL FIRST-TIMER

I will be going for the first time to Universal for a day in January. This is the first time I will be leaving Disney grounds! Do they have a Fastpass system? Is it free? Where can I get cheaper tickets?

Patrick Pedneault  
Willowdale, Ontario

**Universal offers a "skip the line" pass called Express Plus. It's not free, but it allows you to skip the line once at most attractions. As for cheaper tickets, see our story on ticket sales in this issue. You'll have a blast at Universal.**

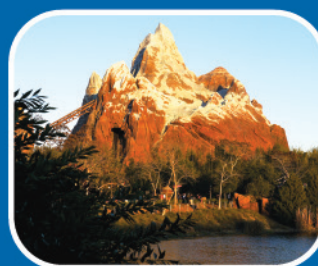
### DON'T CRY OVER SPILLED HIDDEN MICKEYS

I spilled milk one morning and upon returning with a napkin to clean it up, this is what I found. It completely startled me because I had just begun working at Disney World a couple months before.

Traci M. Dean  
St. Cloud, Fla.



## THEN ...



## ... AND NOW

**D**isney's Animal Kingdom opened on Earth Day in 1998. Eight years later, the Himalayan mountains grew from nothing. Fans were excited to see the new Expedition Everest roller coaster ride form before their eyes across Discovery River. It stands just less than 200 feet tall, making it the largest "mountain" in Florida. The mountain is crafted with more than 3,000 pre-fabricated "chips" created from 25,000 individual computer-molded pieces of steel.

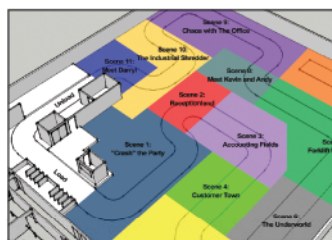
**That's a good one Traci. I'm sure it's not the last Mickey you'll see. Check out Skipper Ben's Top 10 Hidden Mickeys in this issue.**

**the whole thing planned out from start to finish.**

### LONG DISTANCE PARK HOPPING

I am traveling to Orlando and was wondering what the best way to travel between Disney, Universal and SeaWorld is. I stay at Disney and have used their Magical Express before but was going to go to Universal for a couple of days this time and didn't know if it is better to rent a car, hire a taxi, use public transport or some other way to travel back and forth.

Daryl Whitlow  
Pine Village, Ind.



### THE OFFICE, THE RIDE?

I recently designed a theme park attraction and wanted to get your critique as well as let your readers see it. The link can be found here: [tumblr.com/xmrfsphub](http://tumblr.com/xmrfsphub)

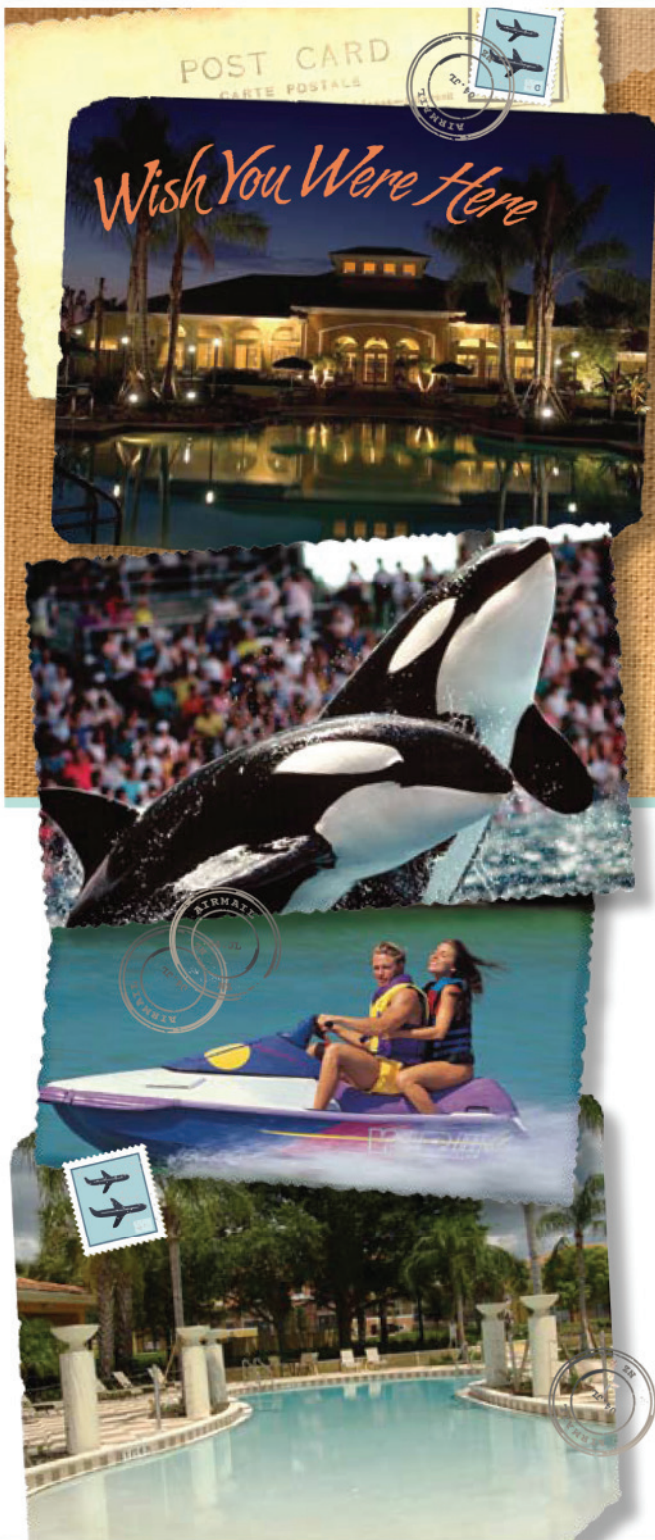
Josh Mercer  
Panama City, Fla.

**As a fan of "The Office" I love the idea of making it into a dark ride at Universal Studios. Readers, check out Josh's idea. He has**

**Unfortunately there's no easy, cheap answer unless you have your own car. A taxi can get pretty expensive at around \$2 per mile. Public bus transportation is cheap, but you'll need to transfer a couple of times. Your best bet is probably to rent a car. Readers, How do you get around Orlando?**



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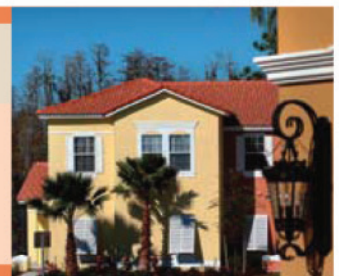
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## We asked our Facebook followers, “What’s your favorite theme park special event in the Orlando area?”

**Barb Ott:** I love Mickey’s Not So Scary Halloween Party! My friends and I go every year. We dress up and go trick or treating throughout the Magic Kingdom! It doesn’t get any better than that!

**Peter van Dam:** For me Halloween Horror Nights at Universal. Because we don’t have that in The Netherlands.

**Teresa Bargman Bothell:** There are too many to pick from! I love being at Epcot during the Flower and Garden Festival to see all of the wonderful topiaries. Mickey’s Very Merry Christmas Party is great because of all the wonderful decorations, especially the castle lights! I have never been to Halloween Horror Nights, but I suspect it will be one of my favorites. I am finally going to make it this October! Haunted houses and an amusement park in one, what could be better?

**Michael Jaworski:** Halloween Horror Nights is really the most special theme park event because it offers a complete collection of new attractions that could exist without the host theme park.

**Robert Angoff Jr.:** Hands down the Food and Wine Festival. Nothing beats it! You have great food, great beverages and great music. Need I say more?

**Banks Lee:** For me it’s Mickey’s Very Merry Christmas Party. Christmas has always been my

favorite time of year, and Disney throws the best Christmas parties! From the parade to the fireworks, the free hot cocoa, to the ice castle lights, everything about that party warms my heart. I mean, where else can you see snow falling in Central Florida?

**Giles Wells:** I don’t see any actual events as my favorite. I like soft openings best. It makes it such a benefit to us that live here in Central Florida that we can get in there and see what is new before the crowds realize it is open.

**Justin Muniz:** Halloween Horror Nights. It’s like a second Christmas for me!

**Danielle Taylor:** Food & Wine at Epcot. I count down to it like Christmas!

**Mary Cheney Gums:** Candlelight Processional at Epcot. It really gets me in the spirit of the Christmas season.

**Loreen Gorzelany:** You have not lived until you’ve seen the fireworks in the Magic Kingdom on the Fourth of July! They are the most spectacular fireworks that anyone will ever see. The entire sky is beaming in all the magnificent colors that only Disney could display. It is absolutely breathtaking. I cannot wait to return there for another vacation next July.

**Kenny White:** Mickey’s Not So

Scary Halloween Party. Candy, characters, parade, candy, fireworks, candy, no lines, special Mansion stuff and oh, candy!

**Laura Polley:** Mickey’s Not So Scary Halloween Party. No lines with Halloween stuff! Plus the Food and Wine Festival. I love getting food from the different booths!

**Erin Smith:** Halloween Horror Nights. Every year is simply a spectacle. I never grow unamazed by what Universal puts on. The houses and scare zones are stunning. Bill and Ted is incredibly hilarious every year. The actors are as talented as any movie star. This event is near perfection, if not that.

**Chantel Bitter:** Though it’s not around anymore, we were huge fans of the Pirate and Princess Party! We travel during Mardi Gras, so it was the only one available to us. Though we have done extra short trips for Mickey’s Very Merry Christmas Party and loved that! The castle lights and the snow are so magical! The parade is huge fun, and the addition of the Dessert Party made it even better!

**Mark Osborne:** Having followed the event from afar through YouTube and “Orlando Attractions Magazine” for a number of years and getting to experience it for the first time in person last year, it would have to be Halloween

Horror Nights! Such a memorable part of our holiday getting to ride attractions late into the night, catching the Bill & Ted show, the scare zones and having a conversation with a zombie!

**Kathy Spinoso:** I would have to say when they turn on the Osbourne Lights at Hollywood Studios. It’s just an amazing feeling when the lights turn on! Makes you feel that Christmas spirit for the whole time that you are there. It’s great!

**Amy Tupper:** The Food and Wine Festival is a favorite at our house. We love to sample all the different offerings from the host and guest countries while our daughter enjoys multiple Kim Possible adventures! Fun for the whole family!

**Katy Maxwell:** Mickey’s Not So Scary Halloween Party! There are some really great character photo ops during the party that you can’t seem to get anywhere else. Not to mention “Boo to You,” one of the best parades in WDW. The entire experience has something for everyone. Can’t wait to go again this year!

**“Like” Orlando Attractions Magazine on Facebook to keep up with all the latest news, comment and answer next issue’s Facebook question.**

## WRITE TO US!

We want your letters and photos! If you have any **comments** about the magazine, **questions** about traveling to Orlando or fun stories or photos to share, simply head to [attractionsmagazine.com](http://attractionsmagazine.com) and fill out the contact form or e-mail us directly at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).



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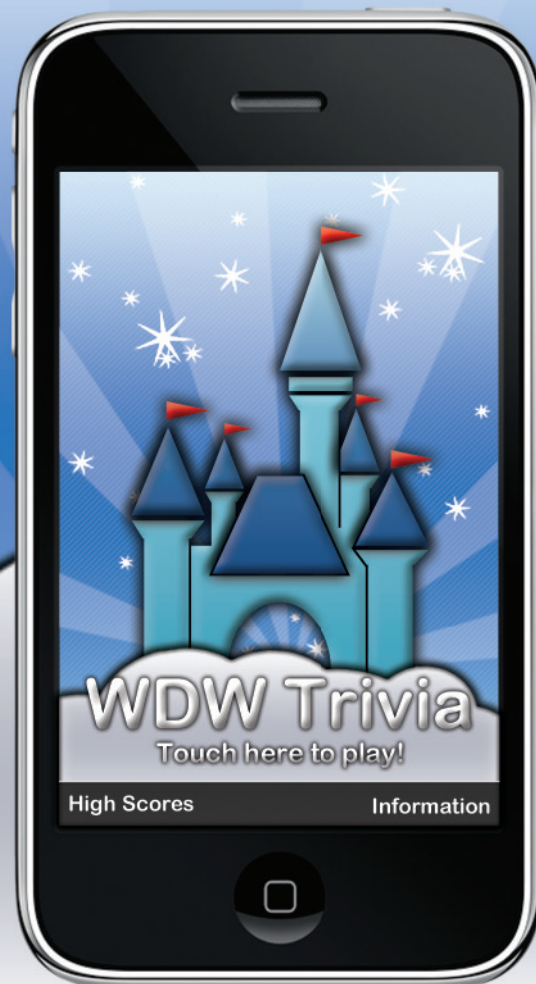
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# Vacation Planner



## HOWL-O-SCREAM

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Busch Gardens Tampa Bay

**Dates:** Sept. 24-25 plus every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night beginning Sept. 30

**Cost:** \$19.95 to \$74.95

**Description:** Leave the kids at home and have a great, horrific time going through the five scare zones to get to the eight haunted houses including one you can go through alone. Also catch a funny sinister musical, Dr. Freakenstein and his naughty nurses and the event's icon Sylvie and her killer band, My X, in concert.



## HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Universal Studios

**Dates:** Sept. 24-25, Sept. 30, Oct. 1-3, 7-10, 14-17, 20-24 and 27-31

**Cost:** \$34.99 to \$74.99

**Description:** This year's event celebrates 20 years of fun terror with a new icon named Fear. This "not for the kids" event features eight new haunted houses, six scare zones, Magician Brian Brushwood and the Bill and Ted comedy show.



## MICKEY'S NOT SO SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Magic Kingdom

**Dates:** Sept. 14, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30; Oct. 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 31; Nov. 1

**Cost:** \$47.95 to \$64.95

**Description:** Kids of all ages will find something they enjoy, from the no tricks treats, dance parties and shows, to themed fireworks and a parade.

## INTERNATIONAL FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Epcot

**Dates:** Oct. 1-Nov. 14

**Cost:** Concerts are included with theme park admission. Food and wine, some classes and parties are separate charges.

**Description:** It's a food and wine lover's paradise with specialty food items from around the world, culinary classes, sophisticated parties and live musical entertainment. See our story in this issue for the full line-up of performers and more information.





We've chosen our favorite upcoming events to spotlight. You don't want to miss these on your next trip to Orlando.

## HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** SeaWorld

**Dates:** Oct. 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, and 29-31

**Cost:** Included with theme park admission

**Description:** The little ones will enjoy meeting Sesame Street's Abby Cadabby and some Halloween sea creatures and they can trick or treat at more than a dozen locations.



## MICKEY'S VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS PARTY

### DESCRIPTION & DATES

**Location:** Magic Kingdom

**Dates:** Nov. 8, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19, 28, 30;  
Dec. 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19

**Cost:** \$47.95 to \$59.95

**Description:** Free cocoa and cookies are just the start of your magical night. There are holiday shows, fireworks, parade and even snow falling on Main Street.



## MORE HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

**All are included with theme park admission.**

- Millions of bulbs blanket the backlot with dancing lights and animated displays synchronized to high-energy holiday tunes at **Disney's Hollywood Studios** Nov. 8 through Jan. 3, 2011.
- Throughout World Showcase at **Epcot**, storytellers share customs and lore from their heritage. You can also see the special holiday ending to the IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth fireworks show from Nov. 26 through Dec. 30.
- The wild side of **Disney's Animal Kingdom** blends with the holidays during Mickey's Jingle Jungle Parade Nov. 26 through Jan. 3, 2011.
- You'll see authentic balloons and floats direct from Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, plus colorful marching bands from around the country and street performers in Macy's Holiday Parade at **Universal Studios** during December.
- Grinchmas returns to **Islands of Adventure** with musical performances of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" in December.
- The parks will be decked out for the Holidays at **Busch Gardens**.
- **Sea World's** Christmas Celebration will feature the Polar Express ride and special holiday-themed animal shows.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Walt Disney World**  
www.disneyworld.com  
(407) 939-6244

**Universal Orlando**  
www.universalorlando.com  
(407) 363-8000

**SeaWorld Orlando**  
www.seaworld.com/orlando  
(800) 327-2424

**Busch Gardens**  
www.buschgardens.com/BGT  
(888) 800-5447

**All events and dates are subject to change.** Please check with the proper organization before attending.  
**Check AttractionsMagazine.com** for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.



■ **STATUS:**  
**NEW EXPERIENCE**

## Meet a Baby Triceratops



**LOCATION:**  
**ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE**

While visiting Jurassic Park, keep your eye out for a cast member carrying an unusual pet. Guests can occasionally meet a moving, eye blinking, 10-week-old triceratops in the Camp Jurassic play area. Also watch for the dino's medical check-up in the Discovery Center.

■ **STATUS:**  
**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

## Something Fast is Coming



**LOCATION:** **BUSCH GARDENS**

They've said a new attraction is coming in 2011, but they haven't said a whole lot about it yet. We do know the attraction will be fast, big and include an animal interaction. Rumors say it'll be some sort of roller coaster called Cheetaka, themed around and including real cheetahs. We'll have more information in the next issue and on our website.

## Luxury Resort for Your Pet

**LOCATION:**  
**WALT DISNEY WORLD**

Best Friends Pet Care recently opened across from Disney's Port Orleans Riverside Resort. The new full service kennel replaces all the previous Disney World kennels. In addition to boarding your pet, they offer luxury accommodations for dogs. VIP (Very Important Pets) can get their own room with a television. You can even sign your pets up for snuggle time and have a bedtime story read to them.



■ **STATUS:**  
**NOW OPEN**



## Catch a Wave

■ **STATUS:**  
**OPENING SOON**



**LOCATION:** **KISSIMMEE**

A new indoor surfing spot called Fantasy Surf will soon open near U.S. 192 and State route 535 on FantasyWorld Resort property. It will offer both surfing and flowboarding using the FlowRider Double system, which is 32 feet wide and 49 feet long.



■ STATUS:  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

## New Fantasies Coming



### LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

The Fantasyland expansion is continuing, but Disney Parks and Resorts Chairman Tom Staggs recently told the Orlando Sentinel newspaper that they're retooling their plans to make them broader by adding some things that aren't just princess-focused. He said most of what was planned will be built but they're working to make everything better. No specifics were given, but it's expected the Little Mermaid ride and Beauty and the Beast restaurant will still be a part of the plans. The expansion is still on track to be finished in 2012 and 2013.

■ STATUS:  
CHANGED

## School's Out



### LOCATION: HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

The Wildcats will cheer in their last performance of "High School Musical 3: Senior Year" on Oct. 2. But the Wildcats will be back as part of a new street show starting Oct. 22. "Disney Channel Rocks" will blast popular music from a variety of television hits, including the "High School Musical," "Camp Rock" and "StarStruck."

■ STATUS:  
GREETING DAILY

## New Fairy



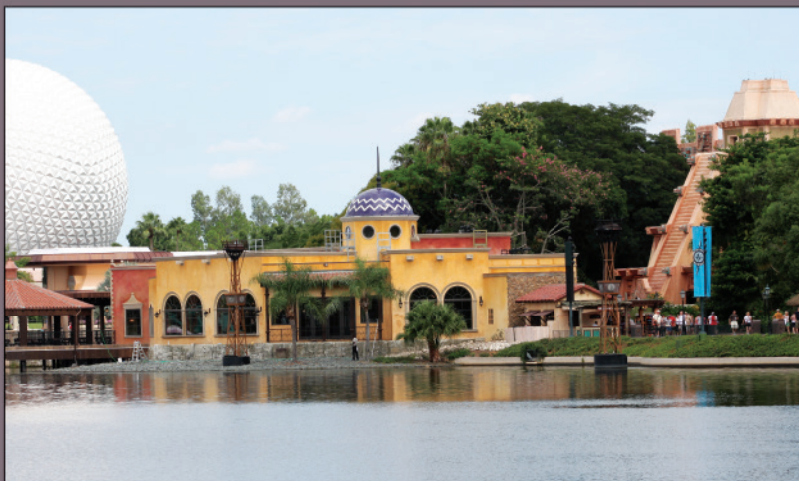
### LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

One of the stars of the newest Tinker Bell movie, "Tinker Bell and the Great Fairy Rescue", is now meeting guests in Pixie Hollow. Guests meet Vidia in addition to her pixie pals Tinker Bell, Fawn, Iridessa, Rosetta, Silvermist and Terence.



## New Place to Dine in Mexico

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN



### LOCATION: EPCOT

A 250-seat table service restaurant named La Hacienda de San Angel and a 150-seat quick serve restaurant called La Cantina de San Angel are now serving. These restaurants share space outside the Mexican pavilion. Both offer a great place to watch the nightly fireworks over World Showcase Lagoon.

## No More KaTonga

■ STATUS:  
CLOSED

### LOCATION:

### BUSCH GARDENS

After a six-year run of more than 10,000 performances in the Moroccan Palace Theatre, "KaTonga: Musical Tales from the Jungle" has ended. Look for the Broadway hit "Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy" to open in the theater sometime this winter.



## Haunted Mansion Hotel Rooms?

■ STATUS:  
RUMOR



RENDERING BY DISNEY

### LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORTS

A recent survey given by Disney to some of their hotel guests asked them to rate what they thought about some new themed resort rooms. Disney already offers some themed rooms such as Pirates of the Caribbean rooms at the Caribbean Beach Resort, but they're considering adding rooms based on the Haunted Mansion and a Royal Room.

■ STATUS: UNDER  
CONSTRUCTION

## New Disney World Homes

### LOCATION:

### WALT DISNEY WORLD

Disney has begun taking reservations for a new residential community on Disney property called Golden Oak. The community will be located down the street from the Fort Wilderness Campgrounds. Imagineer designed homes are for sale between \$1.5 and \$8 million. A 445 room Four Seasons Resort will also be built on the property.





## More Electrical Parade

LOCATION:

MAGIC KINGDOM

The return of the Main Street Electrical Parade was supposed to be just for the summer as part of Disney's Summer Nighttastic. But because of an overwhelming response from guests, Disney has decided the nightly parade will continue with an open-ended run.



■ STATUS:  
EXTENDED

## New

## Entertainment Options

■ STATUS: NEW  
ADDITION



LOCATION:

DOWNTOWN DISNEY

Not much has been happening at Pleasure Island since the nightclubs closed. To help fill the empty spots while they move forward with new plans for the area, Disney has added some new entertainment options. In addition to different musical acts, magicians and statue performers have been spotted on certain evenings. It may look like an angel statue, but be careful, she may steal your hat while you're posing for a picture.

## Flowing Once More

LOCATION:

ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE

■ STATUS:  
WORKING



It hadn't been working for a long time, but the Water Vortex feature of the Poseidon's Fury attraction is working once more. There's no word why this walk-through tunnel surrounded by flowing water was down for so long.

## Less Games, More Ice Cream

■ STATUS:  
CHANGED

LOCATION:  
SEAWORLD

The arcade is now half the size it used to be to make room for SeaHarbor Soft Serve. The new eatery offers ice cream and frozen yogurt with many free toppings.





## Now Boarding

LOCATION:

MAGIC KINGDOM

The Tomorrowland Transit Authority is now called the Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover. The ride was originally named PeopleMover when it opened at Disneyland. It has since closed at Disneyland but it now continues on in Orlando with the PeopleMover name.

■ STATUS:  
NEW NAME



## The Adventures Will Continue

LOCATION:

HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

■ STATUS:  
CLOSED



The Star Tours ride is now closed for good. In August a shutdown ceremony was held for Star Wars Celebration V attendees in which Darth Vader ordered Boba Fett to blow up the building. Then on Sept. 7, the ride really closed for good with a Final Flight for Disney's D23 club members. The ride will reopen next year as Star Tours: The Adventures Continue — a 3D multiple-path adventure taking place between episodes three and four.

## Meet the Animals

■ STATUS:  
WORKING



LOCATION: SEAWORLD

A new SeaGarden has been put in next to the former horse stables. After walking through the area filled with coral and sea creature decorations, guests can meet and have their picture taken with one of SeaWorld's animal ambassadors.

## No More Stories

■ STATUS:  
CLOSED

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

Storytime with Belle was a long-running show in the Fairytale Garden in which kids would help Belle reenact Beauty and the Beast. It's now closed to make room for a new interactive play and greet offering with Rapunzel and Flynn Ryder from the upcoming movie "Tangled". Look for the new attraction starting Oct. 15.





## Feed Kangaroos and Wallabies

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN

LOCATION: BUSCH GARDENS



A new area called Walkabout Way allows guests to purchase food to hand feed kangaroos and wallabies. If you don't want to feed them, everyone is welcome to see and pet the docile creatures from Down Under.

## Get Online in the Park

■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN

LOCATION:  
ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE



The long-closed WossaMotta U building in Toon Lagoon has reopened as a store that sells cell phone accessories and offers Internet access on their public computers. Access costs .50¢ per minute or \$30 per hour.

## New Place to Dine in Italy

LOCATION:

EPICOT

A new table service pizzeria has opened in the Italian pavilion. Via Napoli offers pizza, pasta, salads and more in a casual setting. The cheese for the pizza is shipped in from Italy and the water for the dough is taken from a water source that most closely resembles the water in Naples, Italy.

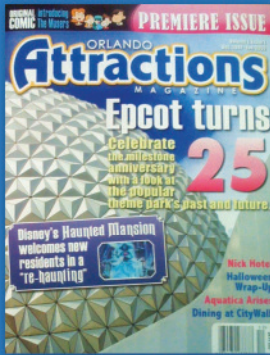
■ STATUS:  
NOW OPEN





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### CURRENT MATCH-UP

**UNIVERSAL STUDIOS**

**VS.**

**ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE**

IF YOU HAVE JUST ONE DAY TO SPEND AT UNIVERSAL ORLANDO, WHICH PARK SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

#### ROLLER COASTERS



**TOSS-UP:** With Rip Ride Rockit and The Mummy, you have great indoor and outdoor thrills.



**TOSS-UP:** The Incredible Hulk and Dragon Challenge are frequently rated as top coasters.

#### DARK RIDES



Since most of the rides are indoors, Universal Studios is hard to beat.



**WINNER:** Spider-Man has only been topped by Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey as the best dark ride anywhere.

#### DINING



Mel's Drive-In and other restaurants offer a fun dining experience.



**WINNER:** Three Broomsticks can't be beat for authenticity and Mythos is usually voted tops at any theme park.

#### SHOPPING



Where else can you actually shop at Kwik-E-Mart from "The Simpsons"?



**WINNER:** The authentic shops in Hogwarts Village are a blast to visit, when it's not too crowded.

#### KIDS STUFF



**TOSS-UP:** The Kidzone offers water play, a playground and ball toss area, plus you can find Jimmy Neutron, Shrek and Barney at the park.



**TOSS-UP:** Seuss Landing is a lot of fun. Plus, what kid doesn't love wizards, dinosaurs and superheroes?



# Photo Finds

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.

Visit our Website for videos and a gallery of more photos.



The **Nickelodeon Suites Resort** celebrated five years with a birthday party poolside on June 12. Sandy Cheeks from *SpongeBob SquarePants* and Jimmy Neutron helped blow out the candles as a huge bucket of green slime fell on the guests poolside.



All 53 contestants for the title of **Miss America 2011** visited the Magic Kingdom on Aug. 27. After they strolled down Main Street U.S.A., Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Cinderella and Belle met the contestants in front of Cinderella Castle. The pageant airs on Jan. 15 on ABC.



June 18 was the day many fans had been waiting for years to come. That's the day **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter** officially opened. Many of the stars from the Harry Potter movies were in attendance for the three-day opening ceremonies.



Disney World's first **Summer Nighttastic** was held June 6 to Aug. 14. The special evening events included new Tower of Terror effects, the return of the Main Street Electrical Parade, the Sounds like Summer concert series at Epcot, a Glow Party at Hollywood Studios and a special Magic Kingdom fireworks show. There's no word yet if Summer Nighttastic will return next year, but the Electrical Parade is sticking around longer.





Photos by SeaWorld

Dozens of winners, heroes and villains from TV's **Survivor**, **Big Brother** and **The Amazing Race** held a mini-reunion at Discovery Cove on July 24. The players then met their fans in downtown Celebration to help raise money for the Give Kids The World organization.



Photo by Don Gworek

**Star Wars Celebration V** brought more than 32,000 fans to the Orange County Convention Center between Aug. 12 and 15. The Main Event was an hour-long interview with George Lucas, hosted by Jon Stewart. Many fans, such as Wolverine Solo here, dressed up for the occasion.



Thousands attended the four-day **Harry Potter conference** dubbed Infinitus 2010 in mid-July. Most of the events were held at Universal's Royal Pacific Resort, but the private "Night of 1,000 Wizards" was held in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. Many fans came in costume.



# From The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man to Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey

## Thierry Coup helps put you in the middle of the movies

**W**hat's even better than making blockbuster Hollywood movies? For Thierry Coup, vice president of Creative Development at Universal Orlando, it's letting the audience step into the experience rather than staring at a screen. Whether it's battling bad guys with Spider-Man or dodging Dementors with Harry Potter and friends, Coup takes his job of letting guests "ride the movies" very seriously.

### How long have you been with Universal Orlando?

I started in 1995, working on Islands of Adventure. Before that, I worked in Imagineering at Walt Disney World.



### What projects have you worked on for Universal?

One of the big ones at Islands of Adventure was The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man. I also worked on Shrek 4-D at Universal Studios Orlando and the redo of the tram tour at Universal Studios Hollywood, which incorporated new attractions like the King Kong project. It's the largest format 3D movie ever projected and makes riders feel like they really are in the middle of the jungle. I oversaw The Wizarding World of Harry Potter as the overall creative director. I've worked on some other small projects, but most are big ones that take years to develop.

### Is this the sort of work you've always wanted to do?

I had no idea this kind of job existed when I was young. My dad was a professional photographer, so I used to go on photo shoots with him all the time. I helped him set up backgrounds and he got me a camera. That got me started trying to create films that people would want to watch. I'm originally from France, but I came to Los Angeles when I was 21, after I finished school, and got involved in the film industry. I was always drawn to creating experiences and taking people to fantasy worlds. I went to Disney Imagineering after working in the movies, and I liked the theme park environment much better. It

involved making films, but I could also put people right in the middle of them. The goal of any good filmmaker is making the audience feel they are living what they are watching. A theme park lets me create an entire world where guests get to walk through the screen and enter another dimension. I fell completely in love with my work and have done the same thing ever since.

### The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man was a groundbreaking ride when it was unveiled in 1999. What was the most interesting part of designing it, and what was the biggest challenge?

At the beginning of that project, I wanted to take all the technology that existed at the time and use it to make an experience no one would ever expect. The big challenge was to create the sensation that you are really in New York, interacting with a superhero and all these incredible villains in three dimensions. We used dark ride technology and what was state-of-the-art 3D at the time, combined with other special effects. It was a challenge to work it all together into one seamless experience and make it all into one world. We didn't want guests to know where there were screens. They should have no idea how it's done so they're just free to live it.



### **How did you feel when the ride finally debuted?**

When you create a big attraction like that, you always worry and wonder whether it's going to deliver what everyone expects. That includes my own expectations, as well as those of the fans, and I really wanted it to go beyond them. Spider-Man is a superhero who is loved around the world. People know him from films and comic books. The best reward for me was seeing the emotional response of the guests. When you finish a project like this, you're not giving it away. You're sharing it with others, giving them the kind of experience you would love to have yourself and leaving them with those incredible memories. That's the ultimate reward for me.

### **How did your work on Spider-Man influence the Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey ride?**

It's another ride where I wanted a seamless blending of technology. I wanted to elevate the ride to a whole new level, just like we did with Spider-Man. These revolutionary attractions come along rarely, so I feel very fortunate to have been involved with two of them. I learned a lot from the way guests reacted to Spider-Man. I wanted them to feel like they were flying freely and living in Harry Potter's world. It was a matter of taking the basics we laid down with Spider-Man and taking them to yet another level through technological advances. A ride like that has three main elements: powerful storytelling; unbelievable places, settings and environments; and incredible ride technology. We didn't want to use something off the shelf. First we



The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man is known as the best theme park dark ride anywhere, but now many people are choosing Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey as their favorite. Thierry Coup was instrumental in the creation of both.

had to plan what we wanted to achieve, then create something that lends itself to what the story needs it to be.

### **What went into the actual creation of the ride?**

The story came first, of course. In reading the books and watching the movies, I saw that some of the strongest moments were the times when the characters are flying over Hogwarts and playing Quidditch. I was also fascinated by the creatures. What we wanted to do required a ride vehicle and system that did not exist at the time. We already had a world of magic that was created for the screen, but now we had to make it real. We had to create something completely new to deliver on this amazing story. We used robot arms for the motion, but they're just one small part of the whole system. We broke new ground and raised the theme

park attraction bar. It took a lot of wizards to turn this project into reality.

### **Now that the Wizarding World of Harry Potter has debuted, what is your next project?**

Currently I'm working on the new Transformers ride at Universal in Hollywood. It's amazing to work with creative people like (Transformers producer) Michael Bay. I love being able to break new ground and create revolutionary rides and attractions with some of the best creative minds in the world, like Stan Lee on Spider-Man, Peter Jackson on King Kong, and J.K. Rowling on The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. They create incredible fantasy worlds. Then we come up with experiences that people could only dream about in the past, and Universal allows me to make them real.





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# HIDDEN MICKEYS AT WALT DISNEY WORLD

Written by "SKIPPER" BEN REBSTOCK

It took nearly 10 years of traveling to Walt Disney World before I was told about Hidden Mickeys – the (mostly) little figures of the guy who started it all, hidden in my favorite attractions. It

just took finding one for me to be hooked. Maybe it's the game, the hunt or my love of "Where's Waldo?" books, whatever it is, I love looking for Hidden Mickeys, and here are my 10 favorites.

# 10

## Snow White's Scary Adventures Clothes on the Line

Remember that old, wonderful show on the Disney Channel called "Walt Disney World Inside Out?" Well I do, and that was the first time I ever heard about Hidden Mickeys. They picked a family out of the audience and sent them around the Magic Kingdom to find three different ones. The first one the family found was on the mural at the load station for Snow White's Scary Adventures. As you sit in the car to begin the ride, look at the mural next to you, where you will find a cottage. Outside the cottage is a clothes line with a pair of shorts hanging on it covered in red classic Mickey shapes.



PHOTO BY MIKEY MONHEIT-MAGIC CITY MAYHEM

## 9 Muppet•Vision 3D Water Fountain

I really like this one because it takes a little imagination to see it. Have you ever wondered what Mickey Mouse would look like if he were a Muppet? Well, wonder no more ("Alien Encounter" reference fully intended). Take a close look at the float Gonzo is standing on and you'll get an idea of what Mickey would have looked like if Jim Henson came up with the idea for the character instead of Walt.



# 8

## Animal Kingdom Tree of Life

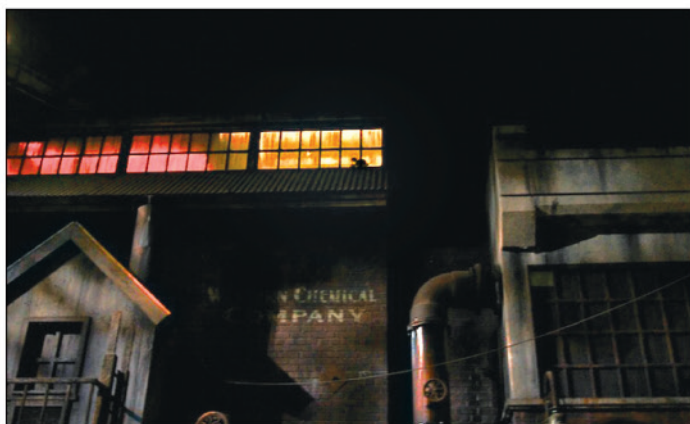
It's big, beautiful and covered with animals from all over the world, spanning the history of our planet. Lions, elephants, crocs, and a mouse. This Mickey is on the side facing Oasis. If you find the water buffalo, look just to the left of it and you'll find a moss patch in the shape of our hero.



# 7

## Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin Mickey Planets in queue

OK, you might be saying to yourself, "This one is way too easy, why is it on this list?" Well, it's on this list for that very reason! Have you ever found yourself having a difficult time explaining the concept of Hidden Mickeys to a Disney amateur? This is the perfect place to take him to show what you are talking about. These are easy to find in the murals in the queue, a smiling side-profile and they are everywhere. Once your new Disney fans see what you mean, tell them these little guys are hidden everywhere in the parks. If they still don't understand, send them to Universal.



# 6

## The Great Movie Ride Gangster Scene

This is one of my absolute favorites. For one, I love The Great Movie Ride, and I really enjoy the two live action scenes. I believe the set design for the gangster scene is some of the finest dark-ride work ever done by Imagineers. As your car passes James Cagney and pulls to a stop, turn your head to the left and look up behind you. At the top of the building, in the right corner of the windows, you'll find a scared Mickey peeking down on the action below. Once the gunfire begins, you'll be wishing you were hiding with Mickey too.





5

## Kilimanjaro Safaris Flamingo Island

As much as I like the small, hidden Mickeys, I'm a much bigger fan of the large ones that are right in front of your eyes, yet you have no idea. I always loved the large Mickey that made up the center of the Hollywood Studios that you could only see from the sky. Expansion and a huge blue hat have made that Mickey go the way of Mr. Toad, but on a small scale, you can see one like this at the Animal Kingdom. Next time you head to Africa and pass the flamingos on the safari, take a look at the island they live on. Yep, Mickey is everywhere, even in Harambe.



4

## Polynesian Hotel Lobby Floor

I love this one because not only is it a cool Hidden Mickey, it's also one of my favorite places to be at Walt Disney World, the lobby of the Poly. The sites, the sounds — the smell of that water, nothing makes me feel like being at Disney World more than standing in the lobby. As you are taking in the smell of this special Disney water in front of the waterfall, look down below your feet because you are probably standing on a classic Mickey.

3

## Soarin' Fireworks Finale

After a two-hour wait, Soarin' better pay off with one really good Hidden Mickey, right? Well, it actually has two. While the Hidden Mickey on the golf ball that flies by your head

is awesome (seriously, it's there, look very closely and quickly next time), it's the fireworks Mickey that takes the cake. While fireworks on a huge screen are a cool idea, this combination of three blasts that form a classic Mickey is breathtaking. Sure, the jarring of the seats as it pops helps the effect, but this one gets my vote for the most "in your face" Hidden Mickey at Disney World.





# 2

## Haunted Mansion

### The Ballroom Scene

There are 999 happy haunts here, but there's always room for one Hidden Mickey. In one of the most famous scenes in the history of Disney theme park attractions, amongst all of the dancing, partying and (my favorite) dueling portraits, someone set a place at the table for our favorite mouse. At the long table, check out the leftmost seat and the formation of the three plates in front of it. A classic Mickey made it to the party.



PHOTO BY T DEVINE-THE MAGIC IN PIXELS

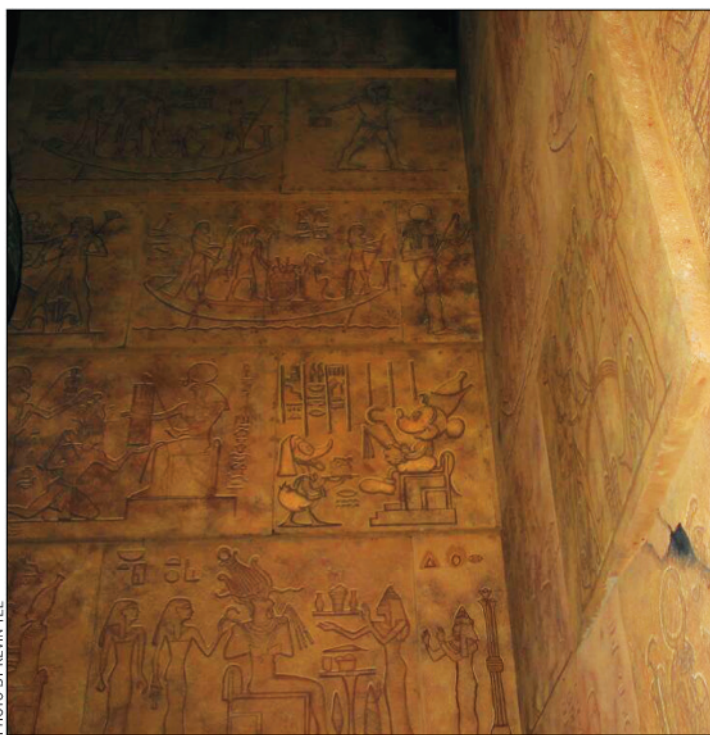


PHOTO BY KEVIN YEE

# 1

## The Great Movie Ride

### Indiana Jones Scene

Combine two of my favorite things in the world — Mickey Mouse and Indiana Jones — and you've got the perfect combination for my favorite Hidden Mickey at Disney World. As Indy tries to escape with the treasure, an ancient tomb with walls covered in hieroglyphics covers the walls. Before you exit the scene, look at the wall on your left. On the third row from the bottom, carved into the wall, you'll find Mickey sitting in a throne and Donald giving him an offering. So creative, so classic and, when it comes to Hidden Mickeys, it doesn't get much better than this.

**S**kipper Ben is a former Walt Disney World cast member. He worked at Jungle Cruise, Muppet\*Vision 3D and as a producer for Radio Disney. He now resides in Dallas, Texas, with his wife Lisa (also a former cast member) and daughter Abigail Lily. He also hosts a weekly segment on the "Inside the Magic" podcast.

**Do you agree with Ben or have a suggestion for a future Top 10?**

Let us know at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com)







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# TWO DECADES OF TERROR

Universal Orlando's Halloween Horror  
Nights marks its 20th year



By Barb Nefer

**M**ost people associate the name "Fright Night" with the campy 1985 vampire flick starring William Ragsdale, Chris Sarandon, and Roddy McDowell, but it means something very different to hard-core horror event fans. "Fright Nights" was the original moniker of a modest, three-night haunted gala in 1991 at Universal Studios in Orlando. It eventually morphed into a 24-night celebration of terror, rechristened "Halloween Horror Nights" in 1992, that draws thousands of fear fans. This year marks its 20th.

Universal Studios was not the first theme park to host a Halloween event. Six Flags initiated the concept with tests at some of its parks in the 1970s. Its signature event, Fright Fest, launched in 1989 at Six Flags over Texas and eventually expanded to other locations, where it is still going strong.

Universal tossed its hat into the ring two years later with a small event that featured just one haunted house. In contrast, the 2010 event has eight haunted houses, two shows and six walk-through scare zones throughout the park.



## Icons

Although Universal has used well-known horror icons like the Crypt Keeper from HBO's *Tales from the Crypt* in 1995, the terrifying trio of Freddy Kruger (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*), Jason (*Friday the 13th*) and Leatherface (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*) in 2007, and the world of *Saw* in 2009, Show Director Mike Aiello said Halloween Horror Nights has become its own brand and created its own franchises over the years.

The event debuted its first original icon, homicidal clown Jack Schmidt (pictured on previous page) in 2000, and he also appeared in 2001 and 2007. Jack became the face of Halloween Horror Nights that year, appearing in television ads, on billboards and in the park. He was followed by other creepy charac-

ters like the Caretaker (2002), the Director (2003), the Storyteller (2005), Bloody Mary (2008) (pictured on page 35) and the Usher (2009).

## What's Old is New

There have been other common themes interwoven into multiple years, but the creative team puts new spin on them to keep them fresh. The Chainsaw Drill Team is a staple, and this year Aiello said guests will see a steampunk version. Zombies have been around in the past, but in 2010 they've been combined with Mardi Gras in a scare zone. "I would have liked a parade, but it just wouldn't have worked. Zombies don't move very fast, and they tend to lose body parts," Aiello joked.

Two characters have been a

constant since 1992. Every year the namesakes of the movie *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* star in their own stage show in a send-up of popular culture from the previous year. Aiello has written the script for several years, but he's putting down his pen after 2010. "It's hard because I love doing it, but I want to get more involved in some of the hands-on stuff," he said. "Writing the show takes a lot of time, so it's the right time to step down. It's going to be very emotional for me at the last show on the last night."

## Controversy

Halloween Horror Nights has not escaped controversy in its two-decade run. In 2001 Universal faced an awkward situation. The 9/11 terrorist attacks quelled America's taste for horror



The Chainsaw Drill Team members have become regulars at Halloween Horror Nights. They chase guests through the streets with their loud weapons. The chainsaws are real, but the chains have been removed.



that year. The event was only weeks away when it was rapidly retooled to tone down the gore. Icon Eddie Sawyer, a demented, chainsaw-wielding maniac, suddenly became a minor character. Instead, Jack did an encore performance and Eddie, whose likeness was already on the merchandise, was recast as his brother. The usually intense event took on a decidedly mild tone. Green ooze replaced the blood and the houses and scare zones were toned down significantly. Pre-9/11 promotional materials showed the original names, but things like "The Festival of the Dead Parade," "Slasher Alley," and "Bloodbath Underground" became "Nightmares on Parade," "Nightmare Alley," and the "Ooze Zone."

The following year, the planned icon was scrapped again because of real-world events. A sinister child named Cindy was supposed to be the 2002 face of

Halloween Horror Nights, but she was replaced by the Caretaker due to a rash of child abductions. Cindy did appear in "Scream House Resurrection" in 2006 and the "Shadows of the Past" 2009 scare zone. She comes into her own this year with her very own haunted house, "The Orfanage: Ashes to Ashes."

In 2008, icon Bloody Mary caused a minor stir in Orlando. A group of local mothers, dubbed the "Metro Orlando Mommies" complained that their children were being terrified by the event billboards featuring white-eyed Mary staring out from a broken mirror.

### Where to Scare?

Halloween Horror Nights is usually housed at Universal Studios, although it moved to sister park Islands of Adventure in 2002, 2003 and 2005. The event took over both parks in 2004 and moved back to the Studios in 2006.

Aiello did not rule out a return to Islands of Adventure but said that having it at the Studios makes it much easier to customize. "Every year, we look at which park we will use," he said. "For me, I think the Studio gives us a lot more room and flexibility. Islands of Adventure is already so heavily themed that the scare zones are dictated by the surroundings. For example, the Lost Continent is all rock, while Marvel is a very colorful comic book environment. It's very difficult to do something that does not visually connect with the surroundings. That's not to say that we won't go back. It's always on the table."

### It's Family Reunion

Aiello saw the 2006 return to Universal Studios as the perfect framework for a reunion of past icons. "Bringing it back to where it all began gave us a big umbrella to bring back those favorites. A



The Rat Lady is another staple of Halloween Horror Nights. She lies in a glass box, surrounded by real, live rats.



## MORE HAPPY HAUNTS

If you like to celebrate Halloween with more than trick-or-treating with your young kids, SeaWorld features its Halloween Spooktacular weekends in October, and the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World, has Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party on select nights from Sept. 14 to Nov. 1. The SeaWorld event starts at noon and is included with admission, while Mickey's party is a separate ticketed event that takes place after park closing. Both events allow attendees to wear costumes.

There is one other Central Florida theme park event that appeals to the older, horror-loving crowd. Busch Gardens in Tampa has held Howl-O-Scream every year since 2000. Like Halloween Horror Nights, it is a separate ticketed event that features icons, multiple haunted houses, scare zones and shows. This year it runs Thursday through Saturday, starting Sept. 30, with a preview on Sept. 24 and 25 and a Halloween night finale.







The Horror Nights: The Hallow'd Past haunted house pays tribute to the past 19 years. It's a haunted warehouse where the props from past events are stored.



These aren't your hometown haunted houses. Each house is elaborately themed.

Sweet 16 party felt like the right thing to do," he explained.

It's another reunion year, and they're also introducing a new icon: Fear. Although he's new to the fans, Aiello said he's been present since the beginning. "Since 1991, Fear has been the unifying element," he explained. "Just look at the icons. Jack instills fear, the Caretaker examines it, the Director captures it, the Storyteller speaks it, and the Usher shows you the way to find it. We put that all together into one entity. When you look at Fear, you'll immediately be reminded of the past 20 years."

### Online Scores

As Halloween Horror Nights has grown over the years, its marketing has kept pace. The Internet did not exist in the public consciousness back in 1991, but now websites and social networks like Facebook and Twitter are an integral part of everyday life. Universal embraced this media, first as a simple information source and eventually as another whole layer of the event.

"T.J. Manarino has spearheaded the website for the past six or seven years, and it's always growing," Aiello said. "At first it was miniscule. All we had were the logos and a list of the houses. Now it's become an amazing tool to give the fans the whole backstory for all the houses and scare-zones."

Aiello said the creative team has always created an elaborate backstory for the event to help with development of everything from the sets and costumes to the music choices, but there was no easy way to share all that information with the fans. The website finally provided a tool. Universal went beyond the main site to create offshoots like



"Legendary Truth," an interactive experience that linked online information with in-park events.

"2008, with Bloody Mary, was the first year we did Legendary Truth," said Aiello. "It let us give the hard-core fans access to extra things that the normal guest was not privy to. Anyone can come, buy a ticket, go through the houses and have a great time, but those fans got something extra. It was very successful for us." That success led to a resurfacing of Legendary Truth in 2010, including a website, Facebook page and its own haunted house.

### No Children Allowed

Aiello said Universal is proud of the fact that Halloween Horror Nights terrorizes its guests. It doesn't even offer a children's ticket price because of the intensity, and the ads make it clear that it's aimed at teens and adults. "Years ago we did some treatments on a children's event," Aiello explained, "but we do Halloween Horror Nights really, really well, and we decided to keep that as our focus. We like using the scare tactics and gore that make it a PG-13 style event. We have that market cornered in this area, and we're OK with that brand. There are other parks in the area that have the kid market cornered."

### Future Scares

Aiello sees a strong future for Halloween Horror Nights, with 2010 as both an end and a beginning. "We have the brands we've created, and people love them," he said. "We wanted to give them a last hurrah and have them go away, at least for a little while. Jack is a great icon and people

love him. We've created some amazing franchises like Psychoscarepy. Now it's time to find out, who is the next Jack? What is the next Psychoscarepy? I see that as the next evolution of the event as we move into year 21 and 30 and 40."

Aiello didn't completely rule out an eventual return of the old favorites. He pointed out, "When you kill off a character like Freddy Krueger, everyone is all the more excited when and if he comes back."



Universal Show Director Mike Aiello.



From inside Horror Nights: The Hallow'd Past, a look at some posters from past years events.



The icons of each event play a big role. This is a look at the Usher from last year's event.



# BUYER

By Leigh M. Caldwell



PHOTO BY BRET ROSEBOOM



# BEWARE

## While you can get discounted theme park tickets, most big deals come at a cost

**A** big discount on a Walt Disney World ticket may seem like a dream come true, but as John Grolnick can attest, buying from the wrong seller can turn your vacation into a nightmare.

Grolnick, a divorced dad of 9- and 11-year-old girls, brought his daughters to Florida for a beach vacation in 2006. He had decided not to include Disney World in the trip, until a bartender at his Cocoa Beach hotel told him about a place to get heavily discounted tickets. At a convenience store near I-95, Grolnick paid \$99 for three Disney passes.

"I thought the guy was going to ask me to buy a timeshare or something, but he didn't," Grolnick said. "It was inside another business; I thought it had to be legitimate."

But when Grolnick and his girls arrived at the Magic Kingdom for a day of family fun, they were turned away at the gate.

"They sent me to customer service, and they told me the tickets had no value," Grolnick

said. His daughters were devastated, and Grolnick wound up buying three one-day tickets to enter the park anyway. But he was out \$99, plus the full-price tickets, which he had not budgeted for.

"I couldn't afford to do it," he said. "But I also couldn't disappoint my kids."

Grolnick had been caught up in a ticket buying and selling scheme that happens frequently at discount ticket booths around the Orlando area.

### **The scheme works like this:**

- A vacationer leaving the area has a seven-day ticket and has only used five days. He sells the ticket at a booth advertising they buy tickets.
- The ticket booth employee uses chemicals to remove the name, and sometimes other specifics (such as the number of days or date purchased) from the paper ticket.
- A new traveler comes along and buys the ticket, with two days left on it, for a discounted price.
- The ticket seller advises

the traveler they can save even more money by taking the ticket to a customer service window and adding days to it.

The new owner of the ticket must be able to get around the park's identification system to use the ticket. But other times, the buyer is caught with a ticket that does not belong to them and they cannot use. And sometimes, the buyer gets a ticket only to find out that it has no days left on it. That's what happened to Grolnick.

The temptation to buy discounted attractions tickets can be great. Many Orlando travelers spend as much on theme park tickets as they do on lodging or food for their vacation. But beyond the high-risk nature of ticket buying and selling, it is also illegal. Tickets to all major Orlando-area theme parks are non-transferable, and Florida law says it is illegal to buy and sell partially used, nontransferable theme park tickets.

Central Florida law enforcement officials have been cracking down on sellers. At least 10 people have been charged with illegal ticket sales – a misde-

meanor – this summer in Orange and Osceola counties. Most of the arrests stemmed from complaints by tourists who bought tickets they could not use. But the business is still going on.

Visits to 11 Orlando-area ticket booths in mid-August found a majority of them engaged in seemingly legitimate business. But the visits also turned up a man on an International Drive sidewalk asking passersby if they had tickets with unused days on them that he could buy, and a booth off U.S. 192 that offered to sell a two-day Walt Disney World ticket for \$79. Upon examination, the ticket was clearly marked as an eight-day pass. The ticket buyer on the sidewalk, and the ticket seller at the booth both refused to be interviewed for this story.

Not all places advertising discounted attraction tickets are illegal, however. Many Orlando-area ticket booths offer brand-new attraction tickets at a steep discount or even for free, if you are willing to spend several hours touring a timeshare resort and listening to a sales pitch first.



The timeshare resorts buy the tickets in bulk (at a “very small” discount, according to one industry insider who asked not to be identified), and offer them through off-site marketing companies who schedule the tours.

It’s all perfectly legal. Whether or not to take advantage of those timeshare offers is a personal matter.

“Are you in the market for a timeshare resort? Can you afford one? Those are the questions you need to ask yourself,” said Credit Counselor Shannon Singleton. “You could be trying to save a couple hundred bucks and wind up spending thousands.”

Discounted park tickets can also be found for sale on eBay and Craigslist. While some of the sales could be legal, the tickets could be multi-day tickets, or even those given to theme park employees.

In July, five people – including an Orlando police officer — were charged with selling dis-



PHOTO BY BRET ROSEBOOM

While not all discount ticket sales are illegal, the deep discount tickets almost always have a catch.

counted Disney tickets on Craigslist. The tickets turned out to be passes given to employees, which were clearly marked “not for sale.”

So, are there ways to get dis-

counted tickets to Orlando area theme parks without touring a timeshare or committing a crime? Yes, but the discounts are not big ones.

After the most recent Walt

Disney World ticket increase in August, a 5-day Park Hopper ticket costs \$309.92. At The Official Ticket Center, an authorized Disney ticket reseller, the same ticket will cost you \$299. That’s a discount of about 3.5 percent.

A slightly larger discount might be found through local AAA Auto Clubs. A summer special for Georgia residents yielded an 11.5 percent discount on a 5-day Park Hopper, which sold to AAA members for \$273.99.

When it comes to searching for discounts on Orlando theme park tickets, the key principle is “buyer beware.” If the seller is not authorized, and it feels like you are getting something for nothing, you may actually be getting nothing for something.

Take it from Grolnick, who says in retrospect, he should have “smelled trouble.” He said, “You know what they say about a deal that’s too good to be true.”



The Official Ticket Center on Apopka-Vineland Road is just that. They are authorized by the theme parks to sell their tickets. Locations like these don’t involve selling used tickets or visiting time shares, but the discounts aren’t huge.



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# 15 YEARS OF WINE, DINE, MUSIC AND FUN

By Chad Emerson

## Epcot's Food & Wine Festival is a fan favorite

If you're a theme park fan who also loves international food, then Epcot's World Showcase is the perfect location to enjoy both. With more than 10 countries from three continents hosting World Showcase pavilions, guests can enjoy everything from sushi to Norwegian summer bread as they take in the sights and sounds along the promenade.

Adhering to the old adage that "there can never be enough of a good thing," every fall the Walt Disney World Resort takes this combination of food and entertainment to an even higher level. When Epcot hosts a festival of food and wine where an interesting line-up of new countries temporarily joins the regular World Showcase rotation in providing guests with authentic global tastes and sounds.

Known officially as The Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, the event marks its 15th anniversary this year. Over the past decade and a half, the festival has become one of the resort's most anticipated and popular gatherings.

### 15 Years of Food and Wine Epcot-Style

Marianne Hunnel has an amazing job. As the Festival Content Manager for the Food & Wine Festival, she and her team select the countries and cuisine that make up the annual fest. While everyone works hard, Marianne explained that the festival is a labor of love

deeply rooted in Disney's core philosophy.

"When we develop the content for the festival, every element should be an educational opportunity for our guests. We like to encourage our presenters to not only talk about technique and product, but to share their stories," explained Marianne. "Storytelling is what our company is all about. We encourage presenters of the festival to share their stories of inspiration."

While the festival continues to grow, the event actually started somewhat more modestly in 1996. According to Marianne, "the festival was originally created to offer guests a new type of experience in the fall. The first festival was 30 days in length. There were 17 market-



place kiosks and 33 'Visiting Masters from the World of Food and Wine.' "

Since then, the event's most significant change occurred in 2004 when the festival was expanded to 45 days. Following that, in 2005, the festival began to incorporate yearly themes — a practice that has continued in subsequent years.

Today, the event has grown bigger than ever with 27 marketplace kiosks and more than 130 visiting masters serving, among other things, 300 unique wines and over 75 international dishes. Add in several other impressive stats — such as 1.2

### More than Enough for Everyone

- More than 300 national and international wines
- More than 75 kinds of international foods (each appetizer-sized portion is \$3 to \$8)
- More than 270 chefs including America's most celebrated culinarians and Walt Disney World chefs
- More than 400 wine and beer seminars
- More than 130 Eat to the Beat! concerts performed
- More than 33,000 bottles of wine and champagne
- More than 690,000 sumptuous samplings
- More than 338,000 wine glasses
- More than 100,000 desserts including freshly baked waffles with berry compote and whipped cream (Belgium marketplace), pear streusel pudding cake (Desserts & Champagne marketplace) and chocolate cannoli (Italy marketplace)
- More than 3,000 gallons of soup, including best-selling cheddar cheese soup (Canada marketplace), chicken soup with rice (Puerto Rico marketplace) and bison chili with wild mushrooms (United States marketplace)







PHOTOS COURTESY OF DISNEY



## What's New for 2010

- Three new tasting marketplaces — Belgium, South Korea and Singapore — plus new menu offerings at popular returning marketplaces including Argentina, Chile, Poland, South Africa, Puerto Rico, Australia, U.S.A., Spain and others.
- Celebrity chef appearances starring top culinarians like Warren Brown, Cat Cora, Todd English, Gale Gand, Robert Irvine, Art Smith, Andrew Zimmern and more.
- A complimentary Marketplace Discovery Passport to be stamped at each international marketplace visited.

million hors d'oeuvre plates, 690,000 food samples and 100,000 miniature desserts — and it's easy to notice the event's growing popularity with Disney World guests.

"What started as a special Festival during the fall months has now grown to a respectable food and wine festival," explained Marianne. "[One] that guests ask when the food

and wine festival is, and plan their vacation during this time."

The evolution of the event into a yearly "must do" for many guests is seconded by Greg Curling, a festival regular from Bradenton, Fla., who finds the ability to sample unique food a key draw each fall.

"Disney does an excellent job of bringing in new dishes to each marketplace every year. During any given Food and Wine Festival, I spend at least four or five days at the Festival," notes Greg. "There is such a wide variety of offerings available now; each trip around the promenade can be different. For 2010, I'm probably most interested in trying the steamed mussels in Belgium."

Yet, while many guests come to discover new tastes, what sets the Food and Wine Festival apart from some similar events is not just the food but the extensive line-up of educational sessions and special gatherings. Indeed, while the food and wine generate headlines, the festival also offers interesting options such as more than a thousand different beer and wine seminars.

When asked about these options, Marianne was quick to note their diversity and usefulness.

"The beverage seminars educate guests about wines, beers and spirits that are created all over the world. Culinary demonstrations teach guests how to create dishes, and show culinary techniques. Authentic Taste seminars educate guests about ingredients and application of these ingredients," she explained.

Other popular features include Cheese Seminars and "Sweet Sundays" — which educate guests about the art of pastry — as well as a host of chef lectures and book signings.



Festival Content Manager  
Marianne Hunnel



Each year, among the most anticipated of these options is the separately-ticketed Party for the Senses. Considered one of the festival's signature events, the party is held every Saturday evening during the festival in the World ShowPlace event venue in Epcot.

Though certainly pricey (\$135 per person), Party for the Senses offers guests an opportunity to enjoy unique wine and food pairings while being entertained by popular performers such as the Cirque du Soleil troupe.

Admission to this year's party will include special reserved seating at the festival's "Eat to the Beat" concert series followed by an evening of food tastings and wine samplings that feature some of the event's premier items. Cirque also returns as does the super-exclusive Wine View Lounge where an additional \$90 gives you access to, among other things, a premium bar and a special artisanal cheese sampling.

If the Party for the Senses is a bit much for your budget, you can still experience other new offerings for this anniversary year as two new venues have joined the line-up: South Korea and Belgium. Both will offer unique food (can you say Belgian waffles!) and beverage

options from their country. The festival team has also introduced an expanded educational and celebrity chef line-up as well as new dishes from more than 10 of the existing countries.

When all is said and done, with an annual attendance of more than a million guests, the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival gives theme park fans of all ages an opportunity to sample the unique tastes from six different continents — all within a single 1.3 mile promenade of international flavor.



## Eat to the Beat

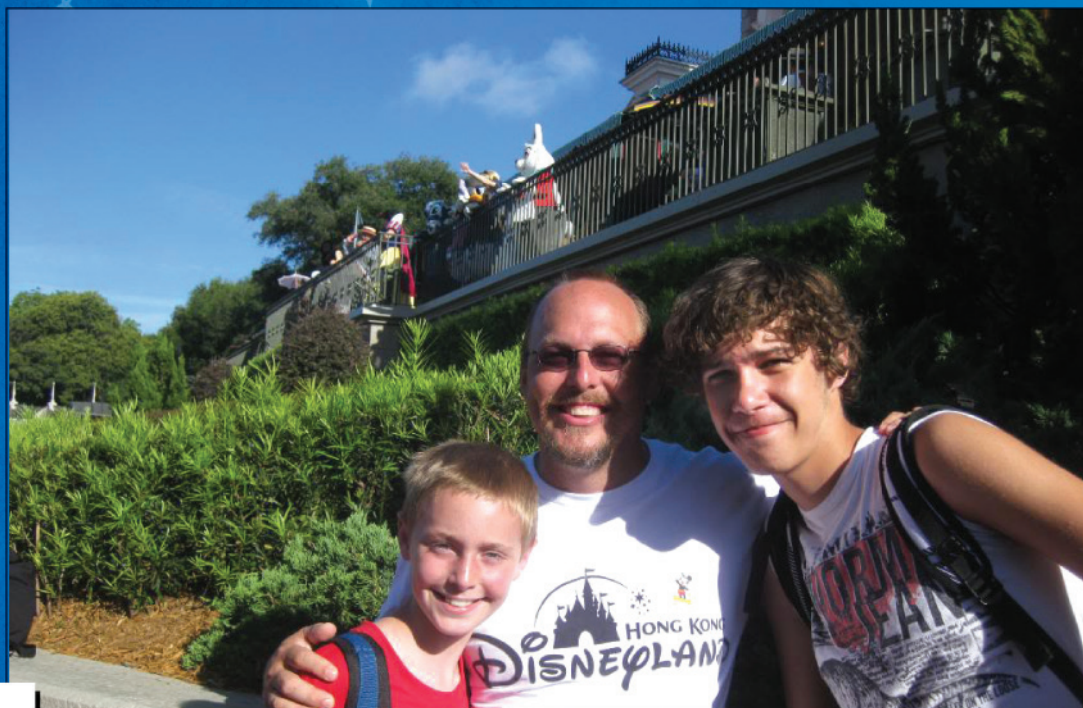
The Food & Wine Festival isn't just a feast for your mouth, your ears will be able to enjoy concerts from top acts each day at 5:15 p.m., 6:30 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. at the America Gardens Theatre.

Oct. 1 - Oct. 3	.....	Taylor Dayne
Oct. 4 - Oct. 5	.....	Kool & The Gang
Oct. 6 - Oct. 8	.....	Sugar Ray
Oct. 9 - Oct. 10	.....	Taylor Hicks
Oct. 11 - Oct. 12	.....	Air Supply
Oct. 13 - Oct. 15	.....	Sister Hazel
Oct. 16 - Oct. 17	.....	Howard Jones
Oct. 18 - Oct. 19	.....	Exposé
Oct. 20 - Oct. 21	.....	38 Special
Oct. 22 - Oct. 24	.....	Night Ranger
Oct. 25 - Oct. 27	.....	Billy Ocean
Oct. 28 - Oct. 31	.....	Starship, starring Mickey Thomas
Nov. 1 - Nov. 3	.....	Boyz II Men
Nov. 4 - Nov. 5	.....	Roger Hodgson, formerly of Supertramp
Nov. 6 - Nov. 7	.....	Jon Secada
Nov. 8 - Nov. 9	.....	Hanson
Nov. 10 - Nov. 11	.....	Rick Springfield
Nov. 12 - Nov. 14	.....	Big Bad Voodoo Daddy





# SEEING IT ALL



**T**he number 71 is commonly associated with records. Barry Bonds needed 71 home runs to pass Mark McGwire for the single season home run record. (He finished the season with 73.) The SR-71 Blackbird holds the record for the fastest trans-atlantic flight. A third record is currently associated with the number 71. It's the TouringPlans.com record for the total number of attractions visited in one day at the Magic Kingdom theme park.

In May of this year, my brother Bobby and I set out to break the then-record of 55 attractions. We reached a total of 59, but fell short of the official recognition because Mickey's Philharmagic was closed each time we attempted to view it. We were granted a gracious place atop the incomplete tours list.

I knew we could do much better. In June I hastily prepared a new approach that I felt would offer us a shot at the new record that had increased to 60. The only problem was that my brother would not be available to run the park with me. I decided to bring along my nephew Kaleb, 16, and my son Nathan, 11, for this attempt.



# Is it possible to see and do everything at the Magic Kingdom in one day?

## Three guys give it a try

By Kenny White

### The Race is On

We arrived about 30 minutes prior to park opening and it was already getting hot outside. We found some shade under a tree as we awaited the Welcome Show. The Welcome Show is the first required attraction. If you miss that, you're already on the incomplete list.

After the show we made a beeline to the castle and took a photo with the mosaic and waited for the Fantasyland rope drop. We were the first three on Dumbo the Flying Elephant. I thought how silly it must have looked for three males anxiously awaiting Dumbo's first flight.

After Dumbo, we were on our way to a new record. We ran to Peter Pan's Flight, The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh and Astro Orbiter like our lives depended on it, before catching a ride on the horse drawn trolley. A cast member said they never have people ride from the castle to Town Square that early in the morning. I knew they put the Main Street, U.S.A. vehicles away early, so we wanted to get that "core" attraction out of the way. The Ultimate plan is separated into "core" and "bonus" attractions.

I decided the best approach to maximize bonus points was to visit as many characters as

possible early in the day. Some people might say characters aren't an attraction. The lines for the characters were by far the longest in which we would wait throughout our more than 16-hour-day. We met a total of 12 characters in unique lines throughout the day. Cinderella's step-sisters wanted to keep the boys for themselves, causing a bit of a delay.

We only stopped for a hot dog at Casey's Corner and some chicken nuggets at Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe while watching Sonny Eclipse. We consumed the snacks and water we brought in our backpack, probably looking like sherpas on a Himalayan trek. We made two restroom stops and picked up some ice cream on Main Street. The temperature topped

out at 95 degrees, so I changed socks several times.

No one was allowed to provide us any type of service or aid, such as providing food or running to gather Fastpasses. We had to do that for ourselves. We visited little attractions like Donald's Boat and Mickey's Country House. We played a video game in the Tomorrowland arcade, shot 35 rounds at the Frontierland



Although meeting characters is fun, it also takes the most time - especially with these wicked step-sisters, who wanted to keep the boys all to themselves.





Shooting Gallery in under a minute and drove the little Shrunken Ned's boats.

I would say we must have appeared insane to the average guest, sprinting to meet a princess in Toontown, dancing in the street party or asking for the Mayor of Main Street's autograph.

We faced some trials because Space Mountain and Thunder Mountain kept breaking down. We caught some breaks when we arrived at The Hall of Presidents and The Enchanted Tiki Room just as the doors were about to open.

We saw every major show, parade and fireworks and many of the more intimate shows like the Casey's Corner pianist, Banjo Brothers, Dapper Dans and Main Street Philharmonic. We even slowed down for a few minutes to pay honor to the lowering of the American flag in Town Square during the Flag Retreat. My son has been to the Magic Kingdom more than a dozen times and didn't know it existed.

The park was pretty crowded that day, so we were dodging in and out of traffic,

being careful not to bump others from their plans. The wait times on several rides exceeded an hour.

## Final Tally

When the day was complete, we reached a new record of 71 attractions in 16 hours and 38 minutes, exceeding the previous record. We had begun our day shortly before 9 a.m. and wouldn't end until 1:30 a.m. after riding the often closed Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. This means we averaged one attraction every 14 minutes. Our longest wait was 22 minutes to meet Aurora in the Toontown Hall of Fame Tent after the fireworks. Donald and his troublemaking Philharmagic didn't cause us trouble this time.

We left after viewing the Kiss Goodnight feeling like we had conquered the world, but extremely tired with blistered feet, sore legs and very hungry stomachs. We didn't make it back to our resort until 3 a.m.

If you're up for a serious challenge and a new experience, I challenge you to try to break our record.







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## Disney's Yacht & Beach Club Resorts offer many perks

Arriving at either Disney's Yacht Club Resort or Disney's Beach Club Resort is like entering into a beautiful old oceanside resort with their posh grand entrances. The two hotels share a common large pool and many amenities but have separate lobby and reception areas. Another special feature – they're the closest Disney resorts to Epcot.



Both The Beach Club, pictured here, and the Yacht Club Resort entrances look similar, but each has it's own design.





A standard room at the Beach Club.



A standard room at the Yacht Club.



## Accommodations

Disney's Yacht Club Resort is decorated with a classic nautical design featuring navy blue and white. The standard rooms comfortably fit a family of five, with two queen beds and a day bed. Suites are also available. King size beds and handicap-accessible rooms are available as well. The rooms are well equipped with all the modern day amenities such as a mini-fridge, coffee maker, iron and ironing board, etc. Disney's Beach Club Resort has the same room configurations as the Yacht Club but with pastel colors and a beach design. It's fun to look around for "Hidden Mickeys." You can even find Little Mermaid characters in the carpets at the Yacht Club and on the walls at the Beach Club.

The prices at each resort are comparable. Each also offers a Club Level which costs a little more, but you'll get a continental breakfast and snacks throughout the day in a private lounge, and access to a Club Level concierge. The Beach Club offers Villas for Disney Vacation Club mem-

bers. Regular guests can also rent them if they're available. The studios are the same size as regular hotel rooms, but the one- and two-bedroom villas have a full kitchen and a washer and dryer. Also there are some nice sitting rooms available just for Villa guests.

## Activities

Periwigs Beauty and Barber Shop is on site and in the Ship Shape Club, you can get a massage as well as get your workout in. Tennis courts and volleyball courts are on property too.

Fun in the sun activities are abundant all around the resorts. The large Stormalong Bay pool is full of waterfalls and has an inviting sandy bottom that you won't be able to resist. There are also three quiet pools and seven spas at different spots around the resorts. Don't forget the pirate ship slide.

There are fun planned activities throughout the day, just check out the recreation calendar you receive at check-in. You can enjoy water volleyball, a campfire singalong or even a movie under the

stars on the beach by the Crescent Lake. You can rent boats or bikes at the Bayside Marina. This is also where you can book a cruise to view the fireworks at Epcot or an Albatross Treasure Cruise where kids 4 to 12 can search for treasure around the lake. Fishing excursions are also available.

If your kids need to get out of the sun, the Sandcastle Club offers an open house with games, toys and arts and crafts. For a night out without the kids, the children's activity center is open from 4:30 p.m. to midnight and is \$11.50 per hour, per child. Reservations are suggested for the tours, restaurants and the kid's room. Babysitting is available in your hotel room through an outsourced company called Kids Nite Out, as it is at all the Disney resorts. The large Lafferty Place Arcade is also a fun place to cool off with the family. If you feel like a stroll, head over to the boardwalk on the other side of the lake. Fun street performers show up all around the boardwalk each evening.





Both resorts offer spacious lobbies. Look for the hidden Mickey on the globe in the Yacht Club lobby.



Stormalong Bay features a slide, beach and a sandy bottom pool.





## Dining on Site

Between the two resorts, you can find whatever you're hungry for.

On the Yacht Club side, try Yachtsman Steakhouse for a succulent steak. Grab a light snack at the Ale and Compass or a cocktail at the Crew's Cup Lounge. There's a buffet style breakfast at the Captain's Grill.

Head over to the Beach Club for a fun-filled character breakfast at Cape May Cafe, or a quiet meal at Martha's Vineyard. Lunch is offered by the pool at Hurricane Hanna's Grill. There are also many snacks and quick meals available at the Beach Club Marketplace. The best place to get a sweet treat is Beaches and Cream. They'll even serve you the Kitchen Sink! You'll definitely need some help finishing that one.

## The Rest

The resort's convention

center is on the Yacht Club side and features more than 73,000 square feet of meeting space. The Grand Harbor Ballroom can accommodate up to 3,000 people. The resorts are a popular place for weddings due to the picture perfect grounds and the wedding gazebo.

Transportation to all the Disney parks is available. Buses to the Magic Kingdom or Animal Kingdom can be picked up at the front of each resort entrance. You can take a boat to Hollywood Studios or Epcot, but they are also close enough to walk. If you need a way of getting to and from the airport, ask about Disney's Magical Express.

Guests staying at the resorts get to enjoy Disney's Extra Magic Hours, just like at all the other Disney resorts.

The Yacht and Beach Club Resorts are celebrating their 20th anniversary this year.

# Disney's Yacht & Beach Club Resorts

**Location:** 1800 Epcot Resorts Boulevard

**Price Range:** Rooms start at \$340 per night

**Contact:** (407) 939-7429

**Online:** [www.disneyworld.com](http://www.disneyworld.com)

Many guests list the Yacht and Beach Club pool as the best of all the Disney resorts. Because of its popularity, no pool hopping is allowed. You have to be staying at either hotel to enjoy it. You might want to hurry and make your reservation; they book up quickly.



*Travel writer Jackie Roseboom specializes in hotel and cruise reviews. Before her writing career began, she worked in the hospitality industry for many years. She is also a contributor to CruiseNewsWeekly.com.*



Just a short walk around the lake you'll find the Boardwalk, other Disney resorts, the entrance to Epcot and a few restaurants and shops.





# California Dreaming

## California Grill is Celebrating its 15th Anniversary at Disney's Contemporary Resort



A meal fit for a Princess - Chef Piasecki's beautiful Crispy Asian Rock Shrimp Salad, accompanied by a glass of one of the California Grill's fine wines.

**F**ifteen years ago, Disney took a chance on a new restaurant the like of which we hadn't seen before. It was May 1995, and there was no Jiko, no Artist Point and no Flying Fish Café. The likes of Todd English, Emeril and Wolfgang Puck were unheard of in Orlando, and Restaurant Row was still an area of undeveloped scrubland.

So what possessed the food and beverage honchos at the house of mouse to think people visiting theme parks would be interested in an avant garde, creative-cuisined, California-living-inspired restaurant that charged top dollar and asked guests to dress up a little?

The open-kitchen concept, complete with flatbreads and sushi, and a menu that highlighted only the freshest in-season produce wouldn't have been out of place in Miami, Manhattan or Malibu. But tourist-oriented Orlando?

Of course, we now know the thinking behind the California Grill at the top of Disney's Contemporary Resort was not only sound but positively inspired. As it celebrates its 15th anniversary, guest feedback continues to

be off-the-charts impressive and the food among the most exceptional in Central Florida. In fact, it was such a trail-blazer, the Darden restaurants company even lured away original Chef Clifford Pleau and Manager George Miliotes to start up their startlingly similar Seasons 52 franchise.

Yet current Executive Chef Brian Piasecki (the fourth to hold that position in this flagship location) admits it certainly wasn't the no-brainer decision it seems today, when Orlando is bursting with fine dining choices.

Brian himself has almost 20 years' Disney experience, hence he is ideally placed to provide historical perspective. He explained: "This kind of dining was very new to Walt Disney World so it was extremely exciting. I was a little bit nervous for the company, thinking 'Are the guests going to get it?' But it took off like crazy.

"Prior to California Grill, everything was pre-prepared in an offsite processing facility, so when this place opened it introduced fresh cuisine and everything done to order. A lot of people still don't expect this caliber of food in a theme park environment but we're making a lot of progress in





Photo by Simon Veness

The California Grill boasts an elegant, subdued look; quiet and dignified without being brash and flashy; and, with the window blinds down, it also feels intimate and personal, despite its impressive size.

breaking that mold. The marketing folks have done a great job in spreading the word – and we do the rest when people get here for the first time!”

Much of the Grill’s original formula remains intact – the wonderful flatbreads, sumptuous sushi, extensive show kitchen and even Sushi Chef Yoshie Cabral – but there are tweaks and additions, a gradual evolution of the fine-dining, health-conscious approach that made the restaurant so breathtakingly original (at least in Orlando) back in the day.

“It is still all about the finest possible produce,” said Brian, “and it has to be

fresh daily. It must be cooked to order; it has to be different and unique; and it must be specialty products. But nowadays it also has to be sustainable. If it’s seafood, it has to be a good seafood choice. It has to be organic if I can get it and it has to be local if I can get it.

“There have also been some behind-the-scenes process changes to track what we do and be more precise so we can use more fresh product. It really has to be happening and, when we put seared bison on the menu, it has to be textbook, it has to be done properly.

“One of the things I have focused on

is alternative, lean red meat, so we have swapped back and forth between bison and ostrich. And we have had an incredible response from guests to this specialty meat, which is a smaller protein than most red meats. There is just so much more awareness about healthy options and sustainability these days.”

Arriving at the restaurant remains a memorable experience. You check in at the second floor reception desk, then await your table and a private elevator ride to the 15th floor, where the rich, warm wood-paneling and muted colors provide a subtle welcome.





The wide, inviting bar is notable for its huge selection of fine Californian wines – almost all available by the glass – but the real eye-grabber is the view, a 180-degree-plus panorama of Walt Disney World, including the Magic Kingdom and Seven Seas Lagoon.

Before dark it is superb; after the sun goes down it moves straight to sensational, highlighted by the park's fireworks show, when the restaurant lights are dimmed and the Wishes music is piped in. Those who have dined earlier are allowed to return to view the nightly spectacle and it provides a fitting finale to the meal itself.

But, for all the drama of the location and extravagance of the show kitchen, the California Grill's real triumph remains the food, and a menu that features a genuine taste-

bud-tantalizing journey of discovery. The brick-oven-fired Flatbreads are still a singular source of degustatory delight, while Chef Yoshie's sushi is simply divine. You could probably travel to her native Okinawa in Japan and not find better.

And then you come to the appetizers and entrees. While things have changed over the years, there are certain dishes so popular no executive chef would risk meddling with their proven stature, like the Grilled Pork Tenderloin (served with a dreamy goat cheese polenta, button mushrooms and a Zinfandel glaze) and the Oak-fired Filet of Beef (as succulent a cut of meat as you will find, served with "loaded" mash potatoes, and broccolini).

Our visit featured a Crispy Asian Rock Shrimp Salad, superbly fresh and vibrant with its accompaniment of Florida citrus and red onions, in a soy reduction and wasabi cream drizzle, and a Pan-roasted Halibut served atop a delectable mound of juicy, stir-fried vegetables and sticky rice, all resplendent in a ginger-soy-hijiki broth. Sadly,



When the blinds go up, the California Grill takes on a whole new feel and style, with a wonderful panoramic vista of the Magic Kingdom. The restaurant also offers an outside (non-dining) balcony for enjoying the view.

we never made it to dessert, but we have it on extremely good authority (thanks to Chef Brian) the Mascarpone and Lemon Cheesecake and Florida Strawberry Shortcake

are both suitably enticing.

So, it may be 15 years old this year, but we think the Grill will have plenty more people California Dreaming in the years to come!



## An Asparagus Tale

To back his claim that the restaurant buys only the best and freshest ingredients, Chef Brian told us the story of his favorite asparagus farm. "There's a farm in California that is owned by a fourth generation asparagus farmer and his asparagus is just amazing. It is wonderful.

"When asparagus season opens up, it starts off pretty expensive and you get people saying 'Come and buy in Mexico, it's cheaper.' But I always hold out for our fourth generation friendly farmer.

"And then his entire family came in for dinner one night and they ordered all the asparagus items we had on the menu – soup, a flatbread and an appetizer – and they all thoroughly enjoyed it and were fully appreciative of our efforts.

"They even had their name on the menu that night because of their asparagus. It is a hands-on family business, and it is a real make-you-feel-good type of thing when people like that come in."





## California Grill

**Location:** Disney's Contemporary Resort

**Price Range:** Appetizers \$11 to \$22;

Entrees \$28 to \$44; Desserts \$12 to \$13.

**Contact:** 407-WDW-DINE (939-3463) or 407-824-1576  
(not for reservations)

**Online:** disneyworld.com

**Hours:** Daily, 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.

*Husband-and-wife travel-writing team Susan and Simon Veness are based in Orlando and are well known for their work in books, magazines and newspapers. Susan is from Michigan and Simon is from England. You can reach them at [venestravelmedia.com](http://venestravelmedia.com).*



### The Anniversary Cocktail

The Golden Gate Cocktail was created especially for the 15th anniversary of the California Grill by Bartender Ray. Raise a glass and join the celebration.

1 1/4 ounces Remy Martin  
VSOP Cognac  
3/4 ounce Amaretto Disaronno  
1/2 ounce cranberry juice  
Orange slice, for garnish

1. Shake ingredients with ice and strain into a martini glass.
2. Squeeze the slice of orange into the drink.
3. Cheers!



The sushi bar and open kitchen have been standout features of the restaurant from the start and are still eye-catching elements today.

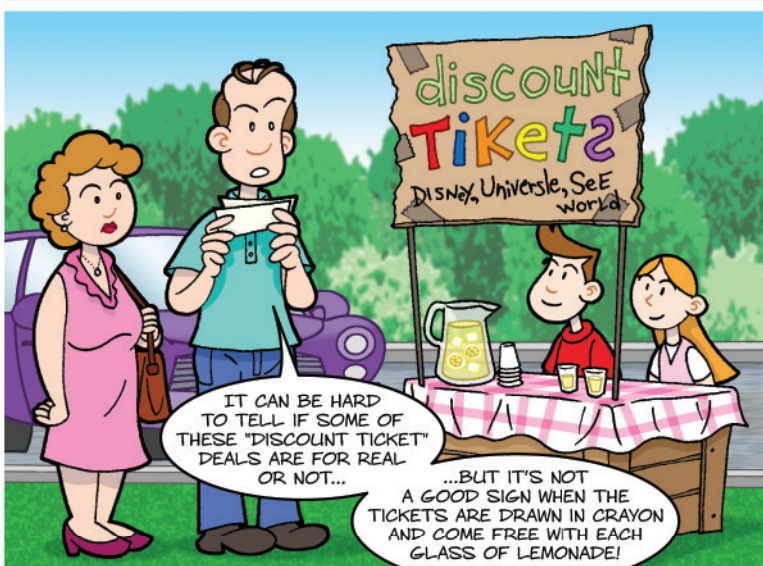
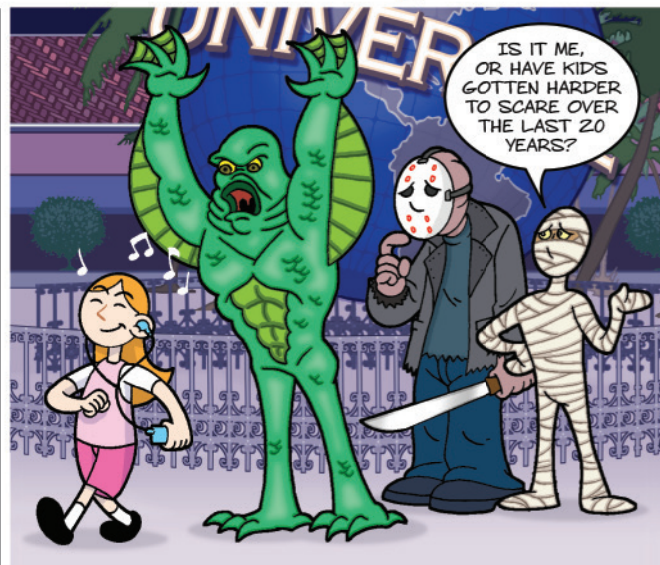


The Grill's inviting bar includes an array of wines by the glass while Chef Brian Piasecki (left) goes to work in the open kitchen.



# AMUSEMENT PARK

by John Green  
& Pat Lewis





# SPOT the DiFFeReNce

James and Oliver Phelps, who play Fred and George Weasley in the Harry Potter films, were at the opening of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter to help set off the fireworks for the grand opening on June 18.

**Can you find the 10 differences on the photo at bottom?**



1. James' (on left) shirt sleeve is longer. 2. The pole at bottom left is shorter. 3. Triangles on the rocket have changed from yellow to green. 4. Rocket reads "NO-HEAR" instead of "NO-HEAT". 5. The pole at bottom left has two chains instead of one. 6. The white cord on the rocket is longer. 7. A window on the building (near the word FIREWORKS on the rocket) is gone. 8. The chimney stack (near the tip of the rocket) is shorter. 9. James' (on left) watch is missing. 10. The circular orange sign on the right is missing.



# Treasure Tavern – a fun night out without the kids

By Matt Roseboom

**T**reasure Tavern adult dinner show features a combination of dancing and exotic acts with an overtone of adult comedy surrounding a three-course meal.

The show is themed around a widowed tavern owner who acts as the mistress of ceremonies. Her cast of characters, jugglers, acrobats and puppets will entertain you. The night starts with the beautiful “rum girls” serving their namesake punch, and a roaming trio of comedians chatting table to table. But don’t expect to just sit back and watch the show. Many of the skits involve audience participation. Some of the actors may be familiar to theme park fans.



“The reaction of the audience has been outstanding,” said Imre Baross, vice president and executive director of Entertainment, for Treasure Tavern. “They are engaged and entertained and the reviews we have received

have given us encouragement that Treasure Tavern will be a success.”

Treasure Tavern is owned and operated by the parent company of Pirate’s Dinner Adventure. Both are located one block from International



Drive at 6400 Carrier Drive. Admission is \$49.95 with dinner. But you can just enjoy the show for \$24.95. Only those 18 years and up are admitted.

## MYSTERY PHOTO



### WIN A PRIZE!

Tell us where this photo was taken and you could win a fantastic prize! To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to [mystery@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:mystery@attractionsmagazine.com).

**Hint:** You may see this somewhere besides in a theme park this fall.



### LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Vicki Sleurs of Latham, N.Y., who correctly guessed last issue's

Mystery Photo location. The shrink ray was on the sign above the Honey I Shrank the Audience attraction at Epcot. The show has now been replaced by Captain EO.



The deadline for entries is Nov. 25, 2010. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Please include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed each year.





## Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area

By Andy Guinigundo



### Toy Story Playland Debuts in Paris

**Paris, France** — In August, Toy Story Playland opened in Disneyland Paris. The new area places guests in Andy's backyard. Visitors are meant to feel as if they have been shrunk to toy size surrounded by giant blades of grass and giant toys. Three new attractions are featured in the new area. The Toy Soldiers Parachute Drop is a simulated parachute drop of 90 feet. Riding in Slinky Dog Zigzag Spin, riders are whirled around faster and faster as he tries to catch his tail. Finally, RC Racer sends riders up and down an 80-foot half pipe circuit.

### Maliboomer Tower to be No More

**Anaheim, Calif.** — As of Sept. 6, the Maliboomer located in the Paradise Pier area of Disney California Adventure will cease operation. Disney said the ride no longer fits with the theme of the Paradise Pier area. The ride was very similar to Islands of Adventure's Doctor Doom's Fearfall.



### Silly Symphony Swings Opens

**Anaheim, Calif.** — 2010 marks the 75th anniversary of the classic short starring Mickey Mouse entitled "The Band Concert." Disney California Adventure opened the Silly Symphony Swings this summer in part to recognize this anniversary. Scenes depicted

on the ride and the music were inspired by The Band Concert and the Silly Symphonies cartoon series that included 75 shorts from 1929-1939. The scenes on the ride were hand-painted by Disney artists. The classic swing ride spins riders over the edge of Paradise Pier Lagoon.

### Dollywood to Construct Barnstormer

**Pigeon Forge, Tenn.** — Finishing up its 25th Anniversary season, Dollywood looks to the future with a \$5.5 million investment in Barnstormer. The double pendulum ride seats 32 riders back-to-back swinging them side-to-side progressively higher to a final height of 81 feet at a speed of 45 mph with 230 degrees of rotation. Barnstormer is named for the daring stunt aerialists of the 1920s. Surrounding the Barnstormer area are several play areas for smaller guests. This area of the park has a barnyard theme, which is a nod to Dolly Parton's rural upbringing.



### Quassy Park to Add Family Coaster

**Middlebury, Conn.** — Construction began in late summer on what is being described as a "family thrill ride." The as yet-unnamed wooden coaster will have a maximum drop of 40 feet with a length of 1,200 feet that will reach speeds up to 35 mph. The Gravity Group design will be the first wooden coaster in Connecticut since the 1930s. While the new coaster goes up, the classic Allan Herschell design Mad Mouse coaster was expected to carry its last riders in September. The 1953 steel coaster was one of the oldest operating in the U.S. The closest Orlando equivalent would be Primeval Whirl (without the spinning cars) at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

### Legoland Celebrates Star Wars Days

**Carlsbad, Calif.** — In August, Legoland California celebrated Star Wars Days as it has yearly since 2005. The weekend featured Darth Vader and the 501st Division of Stormtroopers. Activities included a Droid Hunt, video game battles and



costume contests. Many Legoland and Star Wars Lego prizes were handed out. Life-size Star Wars Lego sculptures could be found around the park including R2-D2 and Darth Vader. "Each year it has changed and grown to become one of our most popular annual events," says Beth Chee of Legoland California.

### Cedar Fair Goes

#### Total Planet

#### Snoopy

#### Cedar Fair Parks -

Cedar Fair is the parent company of Cedar Point, Knott's Berry Farm and other amusement parks around the U.S. Charles Shultz's Peanuts gang has been part of many, but not all of their parks for many years. In 2010, Kings Island in Cincinnati was among the notable Cedar Fair parks to transform their children's area to "Planet Snoopy." It was announced in August that the final three Peanut-holdout parks' children's areas would transform to Planet Snoopy. The three parks are Dorney Park in Pennsylvania, Worlds of Fun in Missouri, and Valley Fair in Shultz's home state of Minnesota. Some of the work will be extensive. For example, Valley Fair will re-theme five rides while adding 14 rides.



### Cedar Fair Goes Coastering For Kids

**Cedar Fair Parks** — In August, all 11 of Cedar Fair's amusement parks held Coastering for Kids in conjunction with the Give Kids the World organization. The non-profit organization gives kids with life threatening illnesses and their families week-long vacations. Participants in the event were provided with admission to the parks, unlimited access to the featured attraction at their particular park, a T-shirt and other perks specific to each location. In all, \$32,000 was raised during the one-day coaster marathon.

### New Life for Kentucky Kingdom

**Louisville, Ky.** — Last February, Six Flags pulled out of Kentucky Kingdom and the park did not open in 2010. Apparently, Six Flags had wanted a renegotiation of their lease agreement with the State Fair Board; the park resides on state fair property. There is now cause for optimism as the owner before Six Flags has re-entered the picture. Ed Hart saved Kentucky Kingdom from bankruptcy in the '90s, growing the park from 10 to 60 acres while seeing a growth in annual attendance from 100,000 to more than one million before selling to Six Flags. The park may see an opening as soon as the 2011 season.



# Lights, Camera, Attraction!



SeaWorld



**T**he midway games at SeaWorld offer a lot of great prizes, but do they take into account that you have to carry your prize around the park the rest of the day? If this boy did win this grizzly-sized teddy bear, would he even be able to lift it? This bear is so big, maybe the boy thought it was a meet & greet and expected to get his autograph.

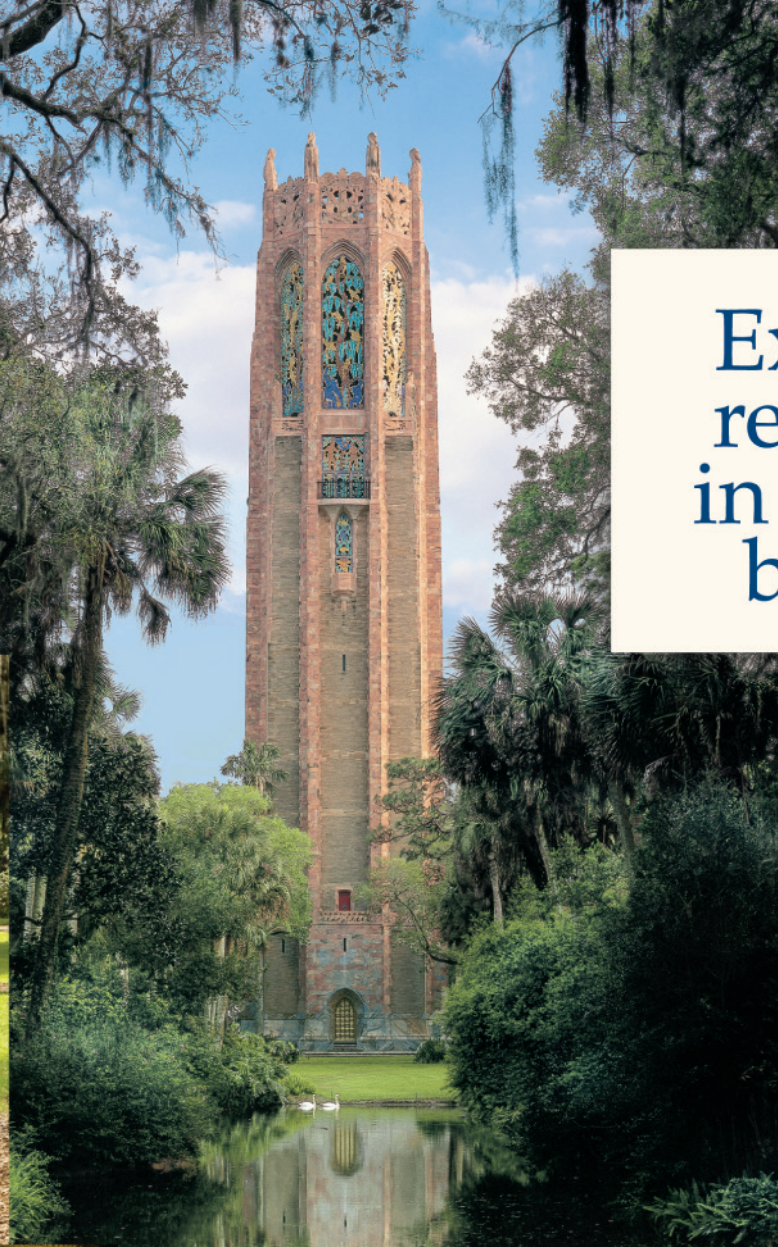


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